Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15784122)

Honor

Three vows that mean everything to a samurai To break any one is a sin deserving of death. To break all three is an affront to everything a samurai stands for; yet at times only sacrifice can mean victory

Loyalty

The assassination of a Crab Clan leader is the first in a web of events that sets the noble Imperial Magistrate Seppun Tashime on a journey through the Emerald Empire. As his investigations unfold, the true, horrifying scope of what he must face becomes apparent. Thrust into conflict with an ancient evil, will Tashime and his comrades from the Great Clans stave off disaster, or will his actions imperil the Empire even further?

Duty

Death at Koten is the first graphic novel set in the epic Legend of the Five Rings storyline. A multiple award-winning game, Legend of the Five Rings tells the story of the Emerald Empire, where Great Clans vie against each other for control, while the denizens of the Shadowlands wait for any sign of weakness.

Samurai drama meets fantasy in a storyline that lives in the imaginations of thousands across the world.

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Jeremy Hutchins (Order #12764122)

Foreword

Legend of the Five Rings™ (L5R) is more than just the graphic novel you hold in your hands. The world of Rokugan was born with the *Legend of the Five Rings Collectible Card Game,* a unique game that allowed you to tell the story of the characters within — their lives, deaths, and descendants. After 15 years the players still continue to shape the lives of these samurai. Soon after the card game came a role-playing game, now in its third edition with players around the world. Aside from these products, Legend of the Five Rings has truly become something greater than the sum of its parts.

I say that because as you read this story, if you have never experienced L5R before, the characters will (hopefully) strike you as cool and exciting. But to one who has played L5R and been a part of the experience over these years, these characters are something more. To people who play the Dragon Clan, wear costumes to events, and created a three story tall Dragon Clan banner for GenCon 2008, the story of Agasha Kyoso is a serious blight on their collective past. Bringing it up in conversation can earn cold stares. In recent times, the players of the Unicorn and the Lion and their war referenced in this story was one of the most hotly contested in recent memory, with those who fell on the side of the Khan vigorously defending him against those who called for his head.

And it all played out among people just like you. They don't just *play* a Mantis Clan deck or a *role-play* a Crane samurai, they are members of that Clan.

This story, this graphic novel, is a tribute to all those players who have come and gone and are still with us after all these years. This graphic novel is a new beginning in the way we, and you, tell the story of Legend of the Five Rings.

If this graphic novel is your first exposure to L5R, we hope you will join us on this amazing journey, telling the story and joining the lives of those in the Emerald Empire of Rokugan.

—Todd Rowland
L5R Brand Manager

Special thanks to Kathy, Jackson, and Tyler for supporting me through the many hours spent bringing this novel to life!

Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15764122)

THE PROVINCES OF THE SCORPION CLAN IN THE EMPIRE OF ROKUGAN.

YEAR 1170
MONTH OF THE DOG.

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Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15784122)

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SEPPUN TASHIME, MASTER.

THE GREAT MAGISTRATE?

WHY IS HE WORTHY OF YOUR ADMIRATION?

HE SERVES THE THRONE, AND THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE, MASTER.

HE HUNTS DOWN THOSE WHO BREAK THE LAW AND PUNISHES THEM FOR THEIR CRIMES.

HE IS A PARAGON OF *VIRTUE*.

AND THIS ENSURES THAT HE IS A LOYAL SERVANT?

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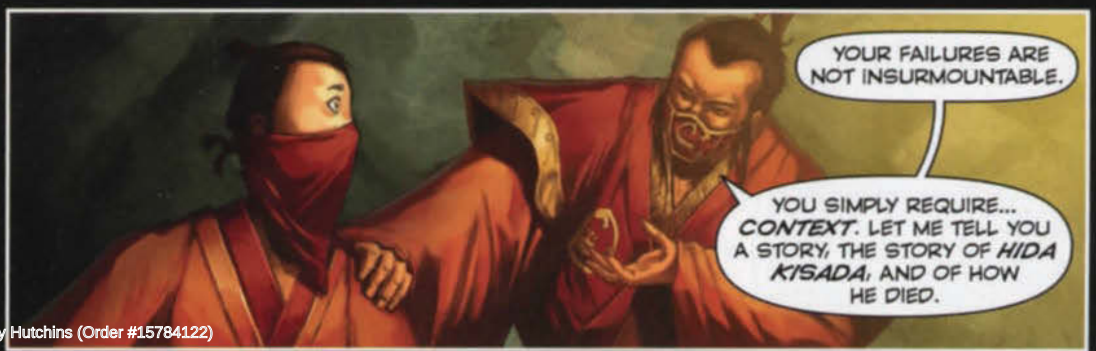

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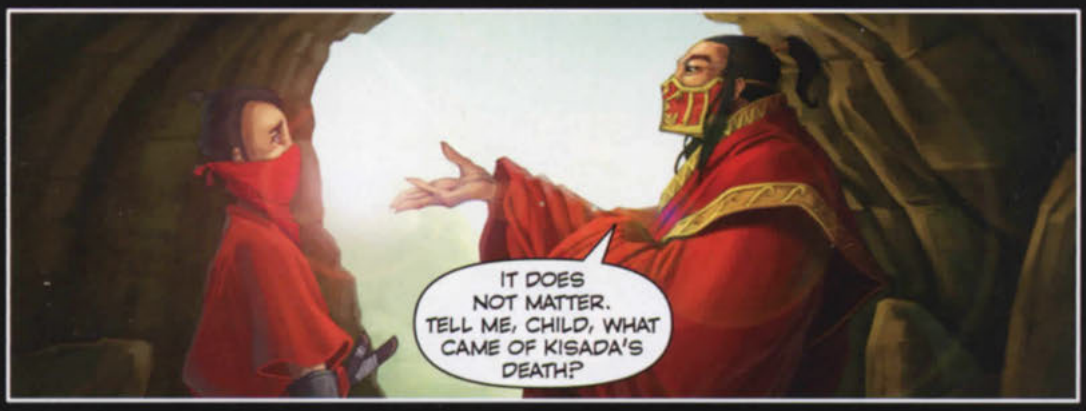

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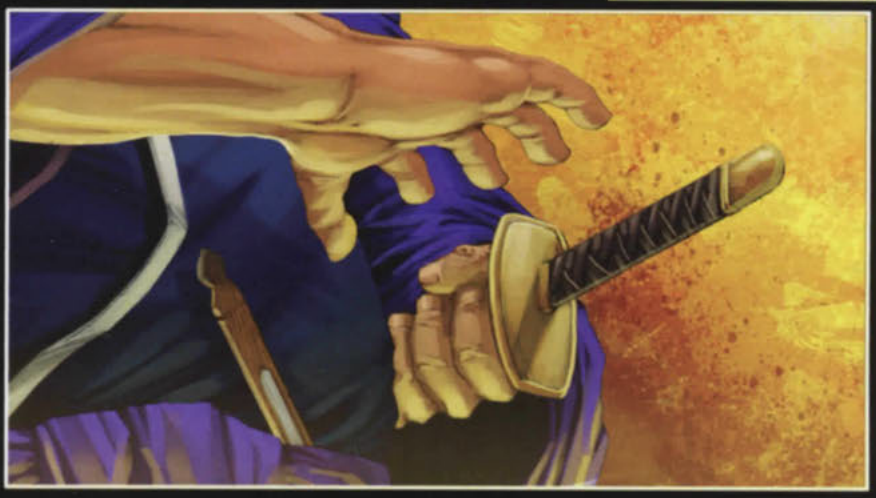

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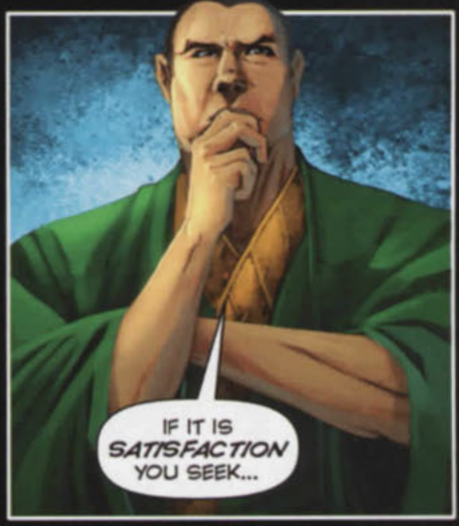

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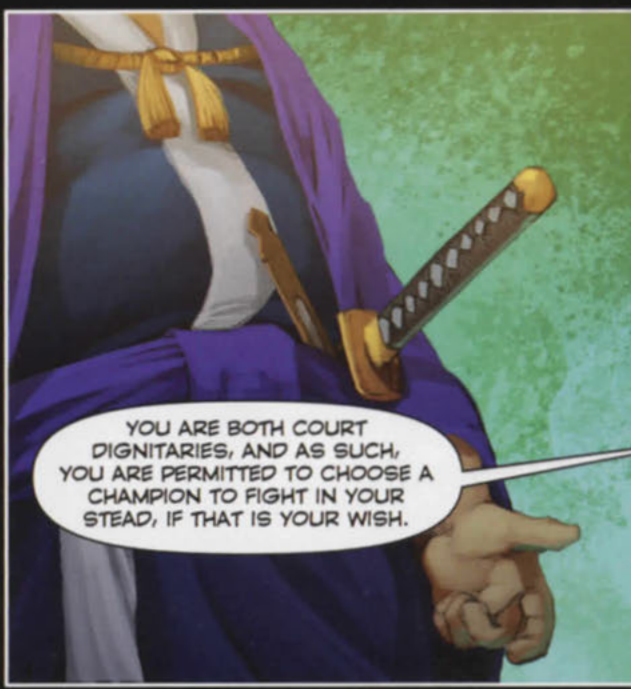

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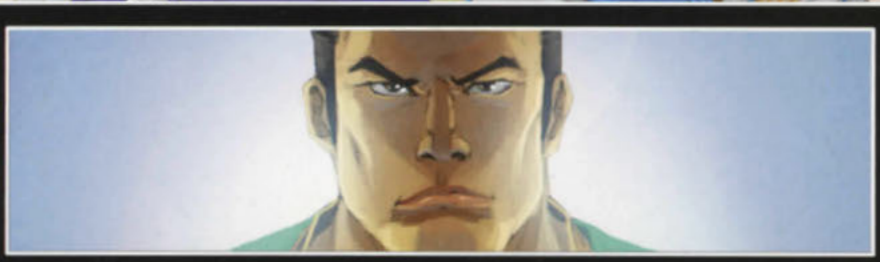

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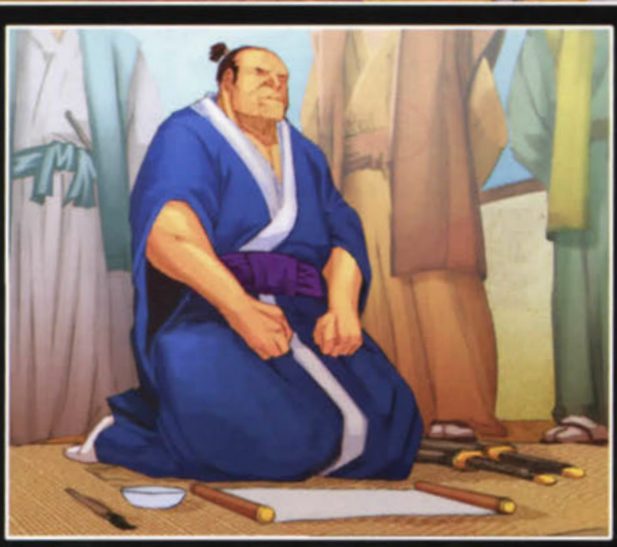

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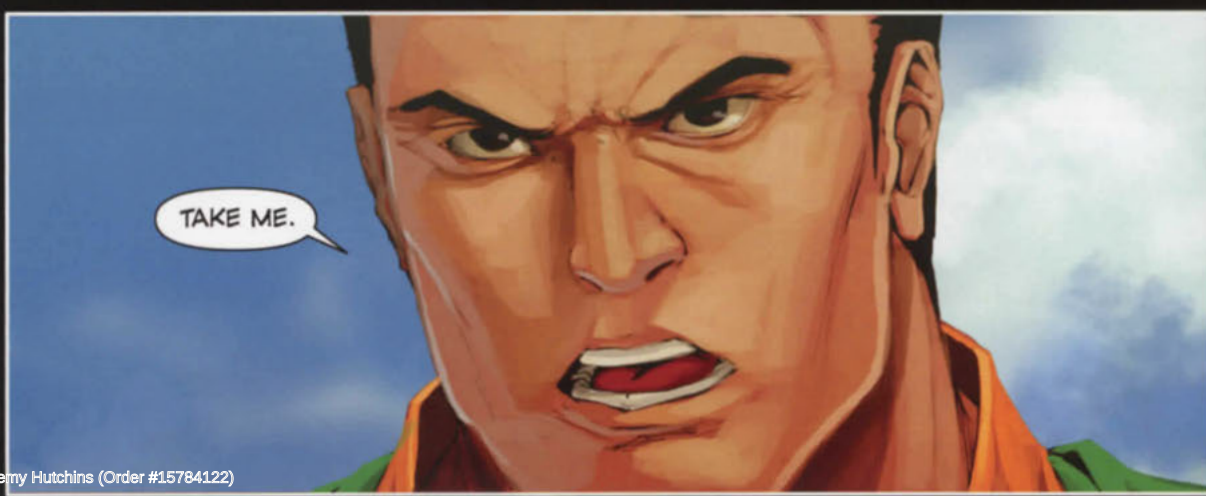

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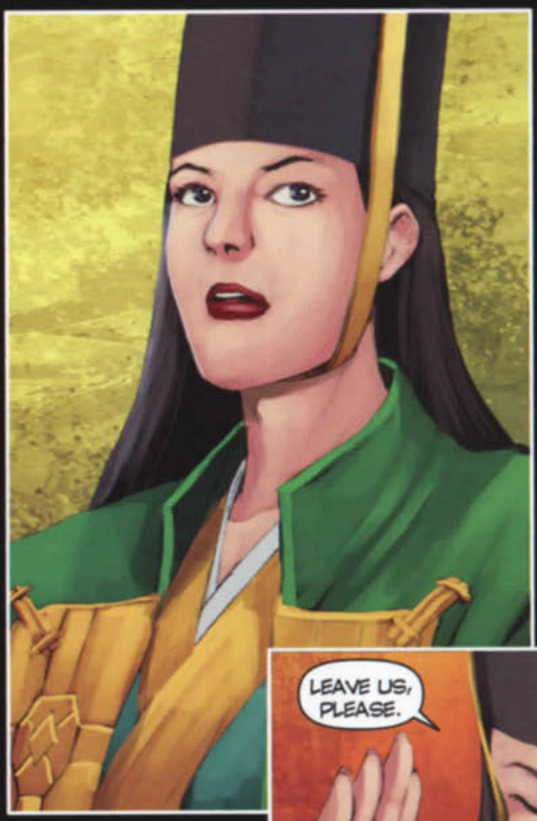

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AGASHA KYOSO, MASTER? AN ANCESTOR OF THE DEAD MAN?

VERY GOOD, LITTLE ONE. SAMURAI FAMILIES OFTEN INTERMARRY, AND BEFORE THE AGASHA DEFECTED TO JOIN THE *PHOENIX CLAN*, MANY OF THEIR LINE FOUND THEIR WAY INTO THE OTHER DRAGON FAMILIES.

AGASHA KYOSO WAS A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN, TALENTED IN THE ART OF SPEAKING TO THE *KAMI*. THE SPIRITS *LOVED* HER, OR SO THEY SAY.

UNFORTUNATELY, HER GIFTS DID NOT INCLUDE *WISDOM*, AND HER OBSESSION WITH A LOVER WHO JILTED HER LED HER NEARLY TO *MADNESS*.

IN AGONY, DESPERATE FOR *VENGEANCE* OR THE *RESTORATION* OF HER LOVER'S AFFECTION, SHE TURNED TO *FORBIDDEN* MAGIC, WHAT SHE BELIEVED TO BE BLOOD SORCERY.

BLOOD SORCERY? *MAHO*? WAS IT THAT DARK ART, MASTER?

DOES IT MATTER? IT ACCOMPLISHED THAT WHICH SHE DESIRED.

HER ATTEMPT TO SUMMON AN *ONI* RESULTED IN THE CREATION OF *KYOSO NO ONI*, WHO WOULD ONE DAY PROVE THE MOST *TENACIOUS* OF THE ONI LORDS, AND THE ONE THAT STILL THREATENS THE CRAB'S WALL TO THIS DAY.

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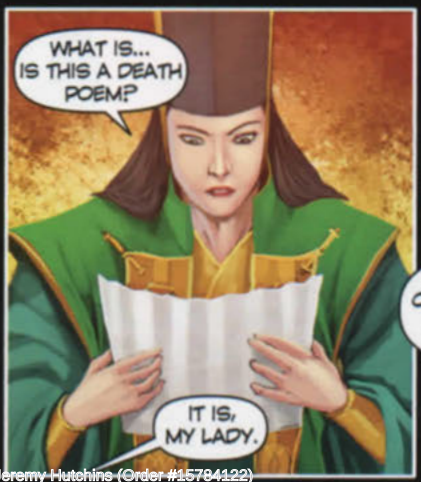

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ARE YOU ASKING ME IF IT IS POSSIBLE THAT *KYOSO NO ONI* COULD EXERT INFLUENCE OVER THOSE WHO SHARE HER BLOODLINE?

I DO NOT KNOW IF SUCH A THING IS POSSIBLE. IT IS TOO TERRIBLE TO EVEN *IMAGINE*.

WHO WOULD KNOW?

THE PHOENIX. IF THERE IS ANYONE WHO UNDERSTANDS HOW SUCH SORCERY MIGHT BE PERFORMED, OR IF IT IS EVEN *POSSIBLE*, THEN SURELY IT IS THE PHOENIX.

THEN IT IS TO THE PHOENIX LANDS I MUST GO, MY LADY. I THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

WHATEVER YOU DISCOVER, MAGISTRATE, THE DRAGON WISH TO KNOW. IF THERE IS A DANGER IN OUR MIDST, THEN WE WILL DEAL WITH IT...

Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15784122)

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WELL DONE, MY PUPIL. NOW, TELL ME OF THE PHOENIX IN *TOSHI RANBO*.

A YEAR EARLIER, THE *UNICORN CLAN K'HAN*, *MOTO CHAGATAI*, LED AN UNPRECEDENTED WINTER CAMPAIGN TO SEIZE CONTROL OF THE CAPITAL.

IT SEEMS HE WOULD HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL, HAD NOT ONE OF THE *LION CLAN*'S ARMIES BEEN PRESENT TO STOP HIM OUTSIDE THE GATES.

THE KHAN'S *ALLIES* IN THE *MANTIS CLAN* AIDED HIM IN GAINING ENTRANCE TO THE CITY, AND FOR A TIME IT SEEMED THE CAPITAL WOULD BE *DESTROYED* IN THE FIGHTING.

UNTIL THE PHOENIX *ARRIVED*.

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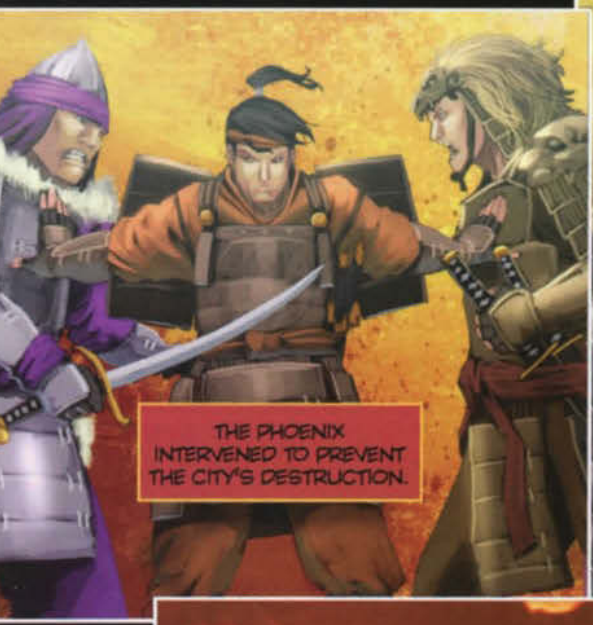

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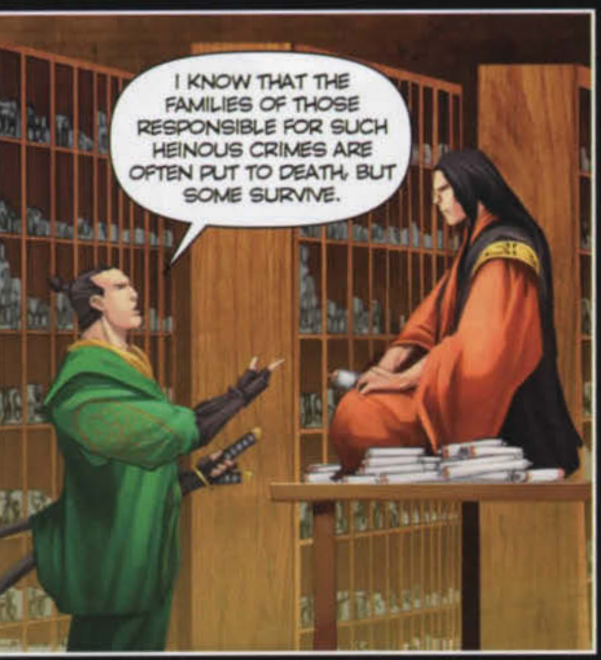

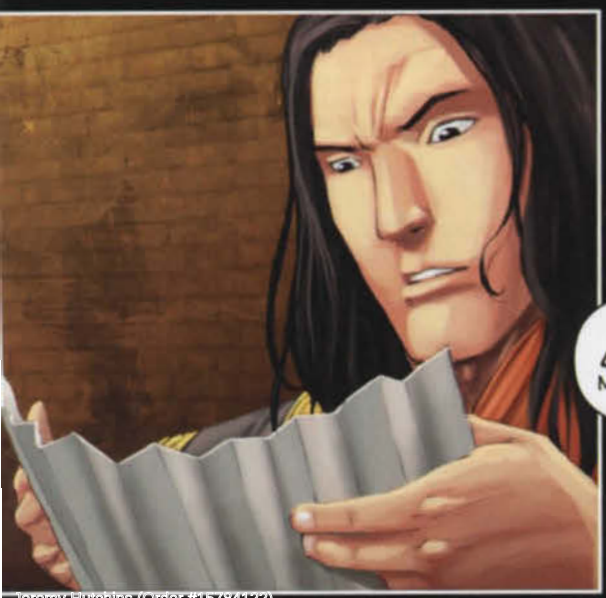

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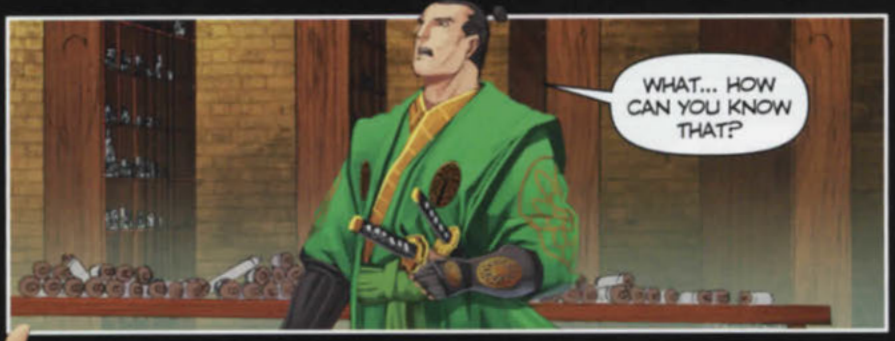

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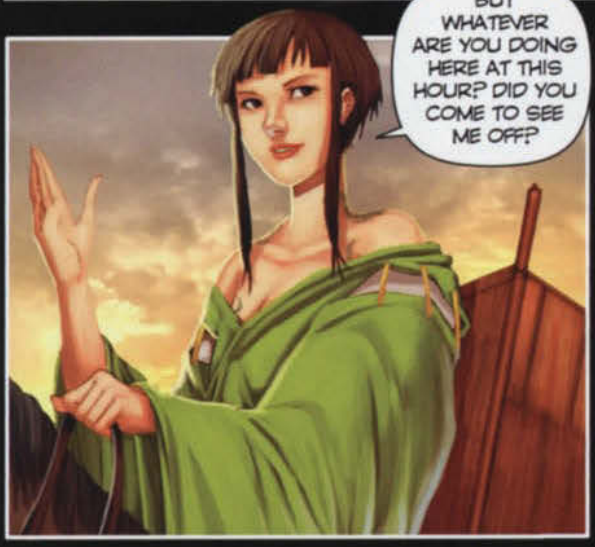

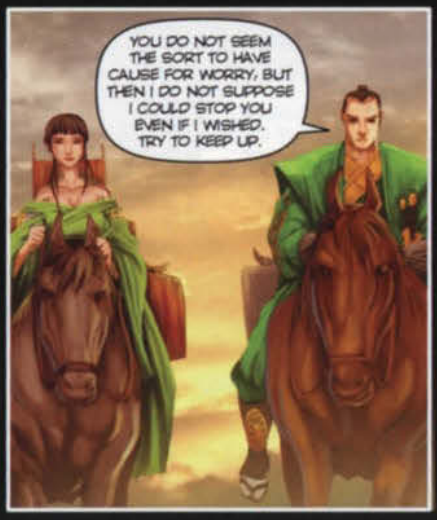

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THEIR WAR WAS NEARING ITS END BY THE TIME TASHIME ARRIVED, IF I TAKE YOUR TALE TO BE CORRECT.

INDEED YOU DO, CHILD. INDEED YOU DO.

KYUDEN IKOMA

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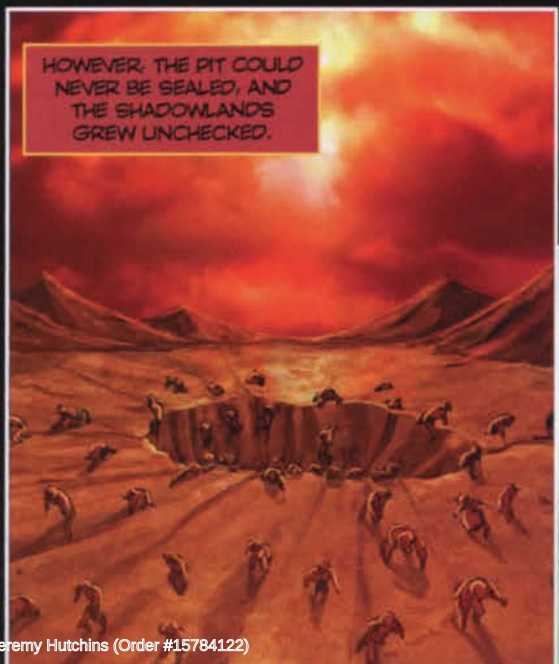

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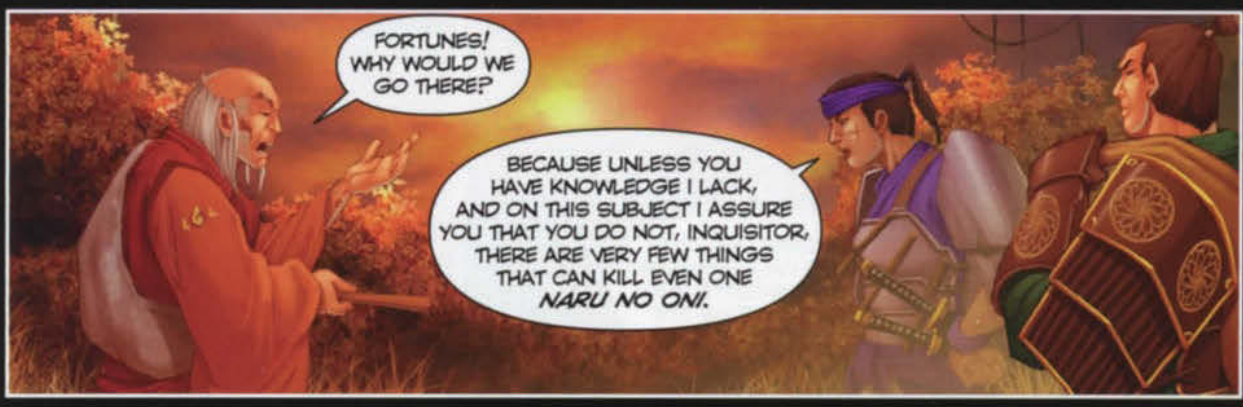

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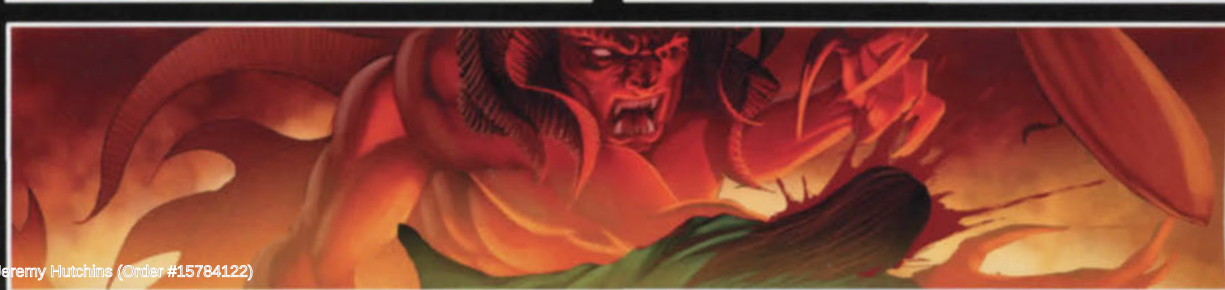

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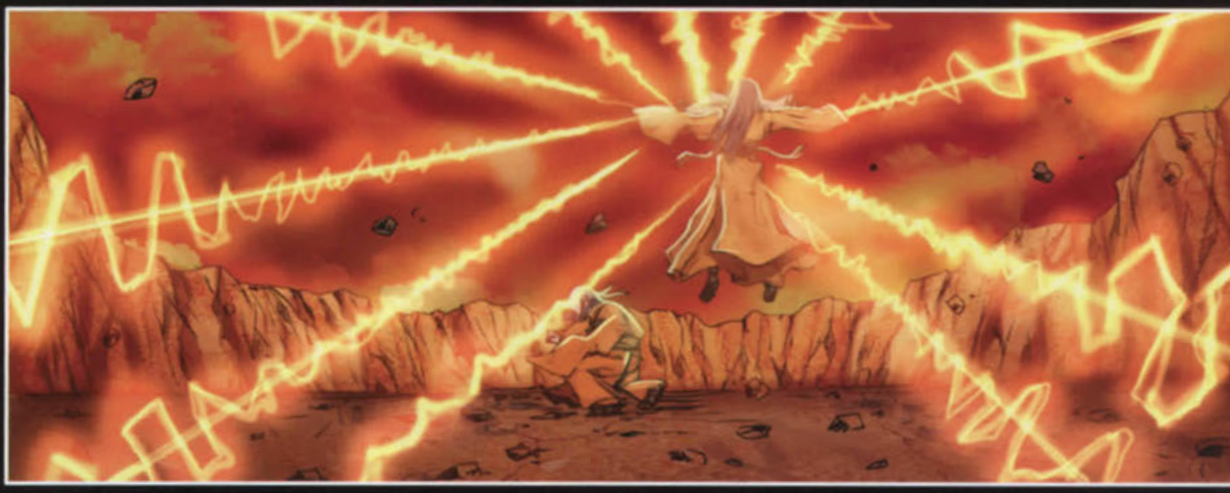

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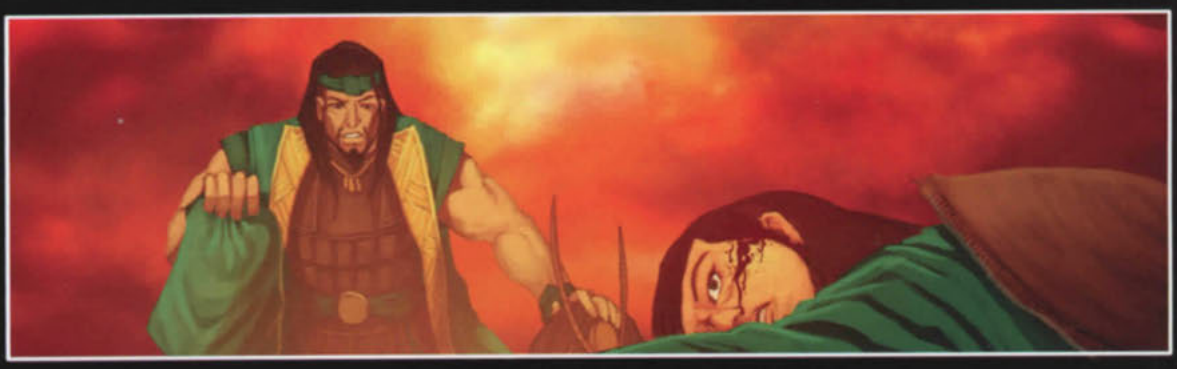

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Afterword

I've been a comic book fan almost my entire life. I started in the third grade when I picked up G.I. Joe® #3 and was captivated by my favorite toys fighting against a giant robot. A giant robot! That was it for me, I was hooked. Which made this project all the more difficult for me, because I was tormented by the thought that this was a medium I had loved my whole life and I didn't know if I could pull it off. It's vastly more difficult to write this way than I would ever have thought! I learned a lot, and I really enjoyed it. I hope you enjoyed it too.

I am extraordinarily grateful for the opportunity to work on a project like this. My bosses at AEG, John and Todd, gave me an incredible amount of leeway to come up with a story that included the different elements they thought were essential to the Legend of the Five Rings. My family was as supportive as always, and my poor co-workers at Westside Elementary School tolerated my neurotic rambling about pacing, transitions, and the power of visualization, for months. I couldn't have done it without them.

I hope Death at Koten was as much fun for you as it was for me. I hope that you'll come to love the world of Rokugan as much as I do. And I really, really hope that if I get to write another one of these, you'll check it out and see how much I learned writing this one.

Thanks guys!

—Shawn Carman
L5R Lead Writer

For Julie & Dalton, my most important fans

Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15784122)

Character Sketches

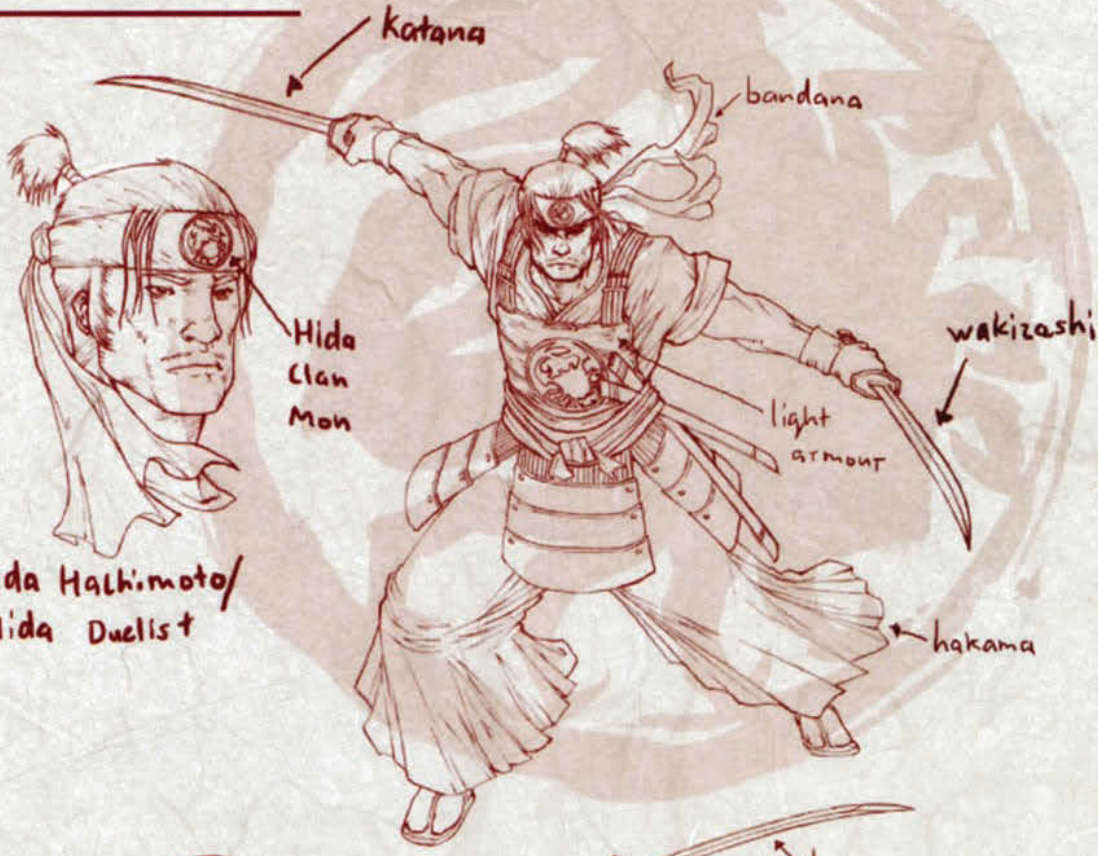
Asako Inquisitor / Asako Fosu

Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15784122)

Doji Courtier

Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15764122)

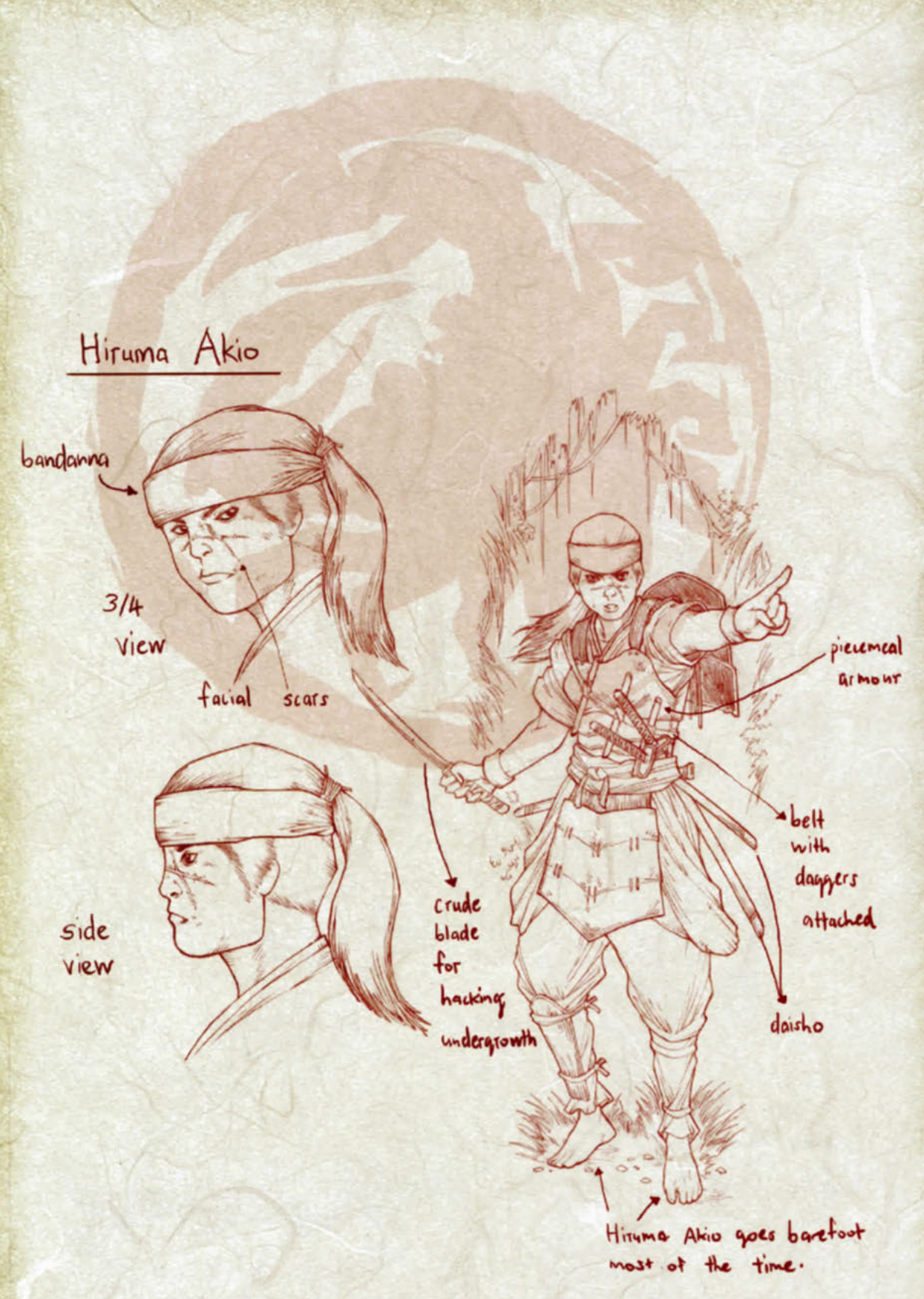
The Duelists



Hida Hachimoto/
Hida Duelist

Kakita Aichiko/
Kakita Duelist

Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15764122)



Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15764122)

Mirumoto Sentry

Side View

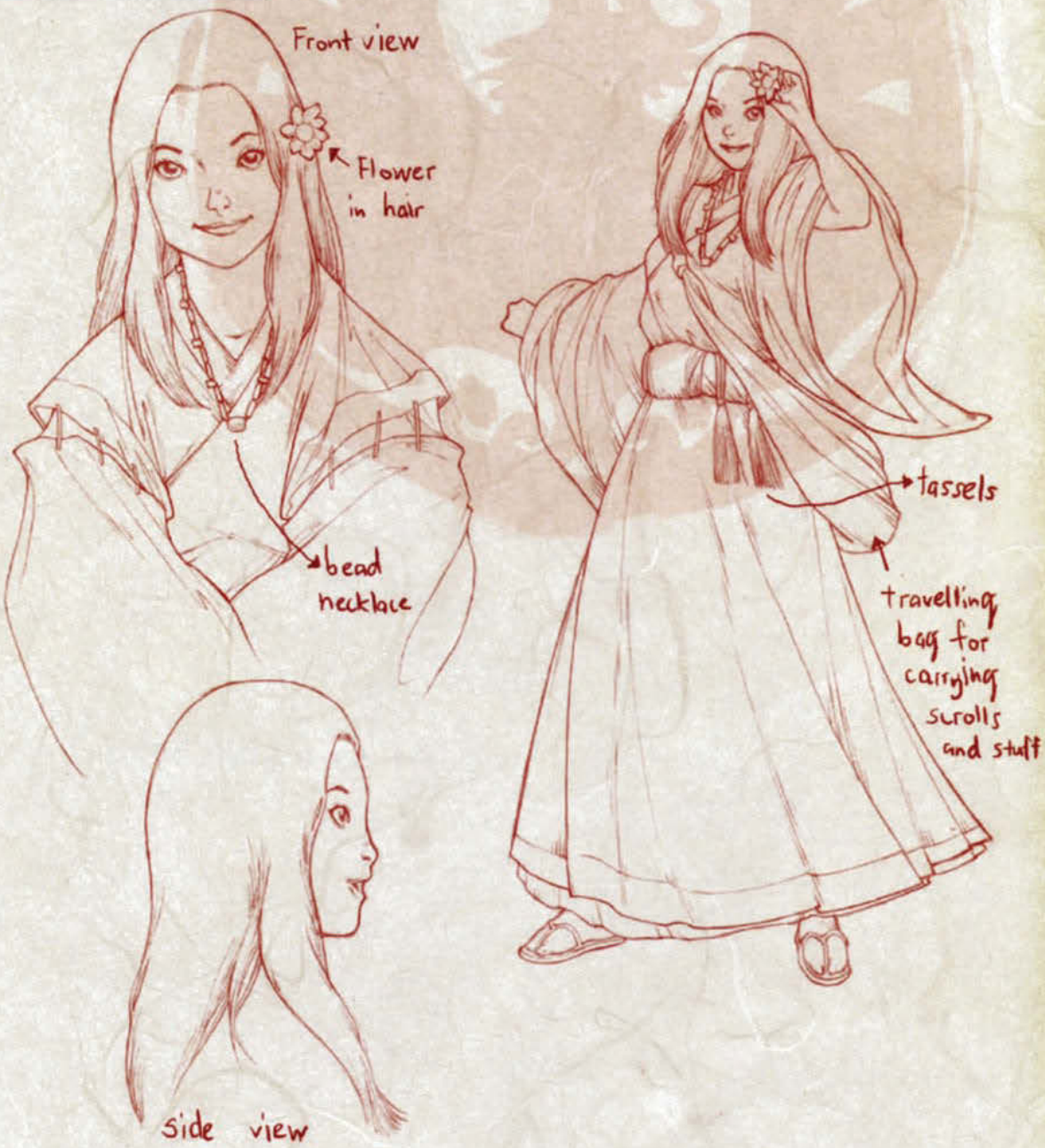
Wears simple heavy armour with daisho as weapons.

Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15764122)

Kitsuki Diplomat

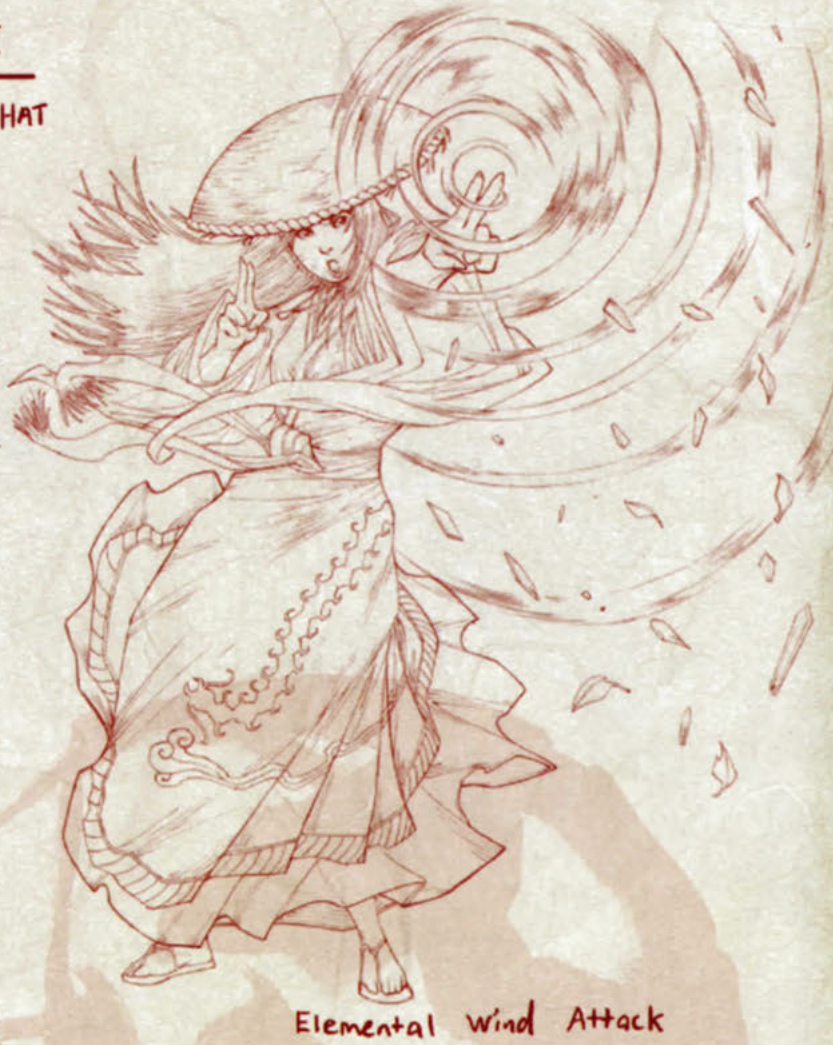
Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15764122)

Isawa Mariko



Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15784122)

MOSHI FIRST MATE



Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15764122)

Tamori Shaiko

Summoning the elemental power of fire.

Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15764122)

Seppun Tashime

In court attire

In travelling clothes.
Wears leg and wrist armour pads, which are part of his armour.

Jeremy Hutchins (Order #15764122)